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Message Text

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21
ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 PA-01 PRS-01 NSF-01

NRC-05 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00

DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /099 W
---------- 088528
O R 070820Z APR 76
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6454
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 2559

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENGR, TGEN, TECH, PFOR, MNUC, EFIN, ETRD, PARM, KS
SUBJECT: US/ROK MEETING ON ENERGY AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

REF: (A) STATE 80670, (B) SEOUL 1496)

1. COINCIDENTAL WITH RECEIPT REFTEL, KOREAN ATOMIC ENERGY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (KAERI) PRESIDENT YUN YONG-KU CALLED ON AMBASSADOR APRIL 5 TO ASK IF WE HAD AS YET ANY TENTATIVE IDEAS REGARDING AGENDA FOR SUBJECT MEETING. YUN EMPHASIZED ONCE AGAIN THAT ASIDE FROM REF B PROJECT PROPOSALS REQUIRING NO FUNDS AND THOSE INVOLVING COMMERCIAL COOPERATION, ROKG CONSIDERED FAVORABLE U.S. RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FOR FUNDING AS VERY IMPORTANT. YUN SAID MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CHOI HYONG-SOP, CURRENTLY CONSIDERING WHETHER HE HIMSELF SHOULD GO TO WASHINGTON AS EARLIER PLANNED AND INDICATED CHOI LIKELY NOT TO GO UNLESS CONVINCED HE COULD RETURN WITH ADEQUATE PACKAGE AGREEMENT.

2. AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT THERE WAS NO PRESENT PROSPECT FOR OBTAINING CONCESSIONAL ASSISTANCE
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FOR VARIOUS PROJECTS ROKS HAD OUTLINED TO U.S. AMBASSADOR

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POINTED OUT THAT TYPE ASSISTANCE BEING REQUESTED WAS
NO LONGER AVAILBLE FOR KOREA AND WE DID NOT HAVE
LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY FOR PROVIDING FUNDS REQUESTED. IN
SEEKING FUNDS, ROK SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITIES' REAL FOCUS SHOULD
BE ON ITS OWN GOVERNMENT TO OBTAIN PRIORITY FOR EXISTING
COMMERCIAL AND OTHER CREDIT FACILITIES OPEN TO KOREA AND
FUNDING FROM ROKG SOURCES FOR ITS PROJECTS. AT SAME TIME
AMBASSADOR AGREED WITH YUN ON LONG TERM IMPORTANCE OF
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION AND URGED ROKGS TO FOCUS
AT THIS STAGE ON ESTABLISHMENT OF FRAMEWORK FOR SUCH
COOPERATION AS OUTLINED IN CHOI/KRATZER DISCUSSIONS. AMBASSADOR
ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT MINISTER CHOI GO TO WASHINGTON HIMSELF AND
THAT WORKING OUT AGREEMENT ON OVERALL COOPERATION WOULD BE
SUBSTANTIAL REASON FOR CHOI GOING.

3. IN COURSE CONVERSATION YUN AGREED IT WOULD BE USEFUL
TO ESTABLISH FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION INITIALLY, INDICATED
ROK SIDE BY NO MEANS EXPECTED RECEIVE ALL IT HAD ASKED, AND
SUGGESTED AT ONE POINT JOINTLY SETTING UP PRIORITY LIST OF
PROJECTS FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT OVER EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME.

4. COMMENT: WHILE ROKS CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR CONCESSIONAL
ASSISTANCE IN SCIENCE AND ENERGY AREA, IT IS EVIDENT FROM OUR
SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS WITH THEM ON THIS SUBJECT THAT OUR MESSAGE
HAS GOTTEN ACROSS AND THAT THEIR PREVIOUSLY UNREALISTIC
EXPECTATIONS REGARDING FORTHCOMING MEETING AND ASSISTANCE HAVE
BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY DEFLATED. AT SAME TIME ROKS ARE CLEARLY
LOOKING FOR SIGN AT THIS STAGE THAT WE HAVE SERIOUS INTEREST
THAT GOES BEYOND REF A AGREEMENT SIMPLY TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS.
THEY HAVE ASSUMED THAT AGREEMENT TO DISCUSS AGENDA ITEMS
OUTLINED REF A WAS REACHED DURING CHOI/KRATZER CONVERSATIONS
AND THAT MORE SPECIFICS WOULD BE FORTHCOMING PRIOR WASHINGTON
GET TOGETHER. FOR MEETING TO HOLD MEANINGFUL PROMISE FOR THEM
AND FOR CHOI TO DECIDE TO COME TO WASHINGTON, WE BELIEVE THEY
WILL NEED INDICATION OF SOMETHING MORE IN THE WAY OF AIYACKAGE
WE PREPARED TO OFFER.

5. IT WOULD NOT NECESSARILY HAVE TO BE MUCH BUT CERTAINLY FIRST
ITEM IN PACKAGE THEY LOOKING FOR AS EARNEST OUR INTENTION IS
SOME MATERIAL ASSISTANCE PERHAPS IN FORM OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
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OR OTHER SMALL AMOUNT ASSISTANCE FOR ONE OF THEIR PROPOSED
PROJECTS. WHILE WE RECOHCIZE THAT TRADITIONAL DEVELOPMENT LOAN
FINANCING IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE WE BELIEVE ROKG MAY BE
INTERESTED IN "SOFT" LINE OF CREDIT TO ASSIST IN FINANCING
SCIENCE ACTIVITIES. THIS MAY ALSO PROVIDE AID AN OPPORTUNITY
TO INTRODUCE MOST TO REIMBURSABLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (WE
SUGGEST YOU TALK TO WILLIAM KENDRICK, SPEC. ASST. TO ADMIN.,
ON THIS POSSIBILITY). SECONDLY, ROKS WILL NEED MORE SPECIFIC

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INDICATION THAT WE PREPARED TO DISCUSS POSITIVELY: NUCLEAR ENERGY COMMITTEE, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT, SISTER LAB RELATIONSHIP, USG COOPERATION IN DEVELOPING TECHNICAL CAPABILITY IN NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY, AND USG ASSISTANCE IN MIDWIFING COMMERCIAL VENTURES. FINALLY, SINCE THERE ARE CLEARLY ELEMENTS OF FACE INVOLVED CHOI'S DECISION TO COME HIMSELF WILL ALSO HINGE AS INDICATED SEOUL 2452 ON ATTENDANCE OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY IRVING AT MEETING OR AT VERY MINIMUM PROMISE OF CONVERSATIONS WITH MR. IRVING AND OTHER KEY APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON.

6. WE HAVE HELD UP FORMALLY CONVEYING AGENDA OUTLINED REF A PENDING ITS RECONSIDERATION IN LIGHT ABOVE THOUGHTS. IN SUM, IT IS OUR VIEW THAT IF WE PRESENT AGENDA AS OUTLINED WE RUN SERIOUS RISK OF MINISTER NOT COMING TO WASHINGTON AND OF UNDERMINING PROMISE OF FUTURE PROGRESS IN SCIENCE AND ENERGY AREA FROM THE OUTSET. GIVEN GENESIS OUR AGREEMENT TO ENTER THESE DISCUSSIONS, IMPORTANCE PRESIDENT PARK HIMSELF HAS ATTACHED TO THEM, AND MANIFOLD LONG TERM COMMERCIAL TECHNICAL AND OTHER ADVANTAGES IN DEVELOPING CLOSE SCIENTIFIC RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS DYNAMIC COUNTRY, UNSECCESSFUL MEETING, OR CANCELLATION BY ROKS, WOULD NOT ONLY REPRESENT LOST OPPORTUNITY IN OUR VIEW BUT WOULD BE INTERPRETED AT HIGHEST LEVELS AS LACK OF GOOD FAITH. IT COULD ALSO RESULT IN MUCH MORE DETERMINED ROKG EFFORTS TO TURN TO THIRD COUNTRY SOURCES, WHERE WE WOULD HAVE FAR LESS CONTROL. WE REALIZE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED, BUT BELIEVE THAT POSITIVE EFFORT TO PUT TOGETHER MINIMUM COST PACKAGE INDICATING WE HAVE REAL INTEREST BOTH FEASIBLE AND IMPORTANT.

7. TIME FOR MEETING IS NOW FAST APPROACHING AND MOST OFFICIALS HAVE INDICATED TO US THAT MINISTER CHOI FACED WITH URGENT REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE PRESIDENT PARK WITH STATUS REPORT ON WHAT U.S. EXPECTED TO AGREE TO AT WASHINGTON
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MEETING. ACCORDINGLY URGENT REPLY ABOVE RECOMMENDATIONS REQUESTED.
SNEIDER

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